

Appl. No. 10/617,323
Amendment
November 12, 2004

REMARKS

Claims 1-35 are now pending in this application. Claims 1, 5, 16, 28 and 32 have been amended via this paper to more clearly define the invention.

The Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for his efforts with regard to the Official Office Action, dated October 19, 2004, related to the above referenced application. The Applicants also wish to express appreciation for the timeliness of the Official Office Action.

Additionally, the Applicants thank the Examiner for his courtesy during the personal interview conducted with Applicant's representative Mr. James E. Shultz Jr. on November 10, 2004. The substance of this interview is incorporated herein.

Turning to paragraph 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to the specification due to an associated informality. The Applicants have amended the specification as suggested by the Examiner, therefore, this objection is now moot.

Turning to paragraph 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to claims 1, 11-13, 20-22 and 28 due to various informalities. The Applicants have amended each of these claims as suggested by the Examiner, therefore, these objections are now moot. It should be understood that none of these amendments were made to distinguish from prior art. Therefore, Applicants submit that the scope of the claims, including equivalents thereof, shall be unaffected by the amendments.

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Turning to paragraph 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 25-27 under 35 U.S.C. §112. The Examiner indicated during the personal interview with Applicant's representative that this rejection would be removed without amendment. Therefore, Applicants submit that claims 25-27 are in condition for allowance as originally presented.

Turning to paragraph 8 of the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-24 and 28-35 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Schofield et al. (U.S. Patent 5,796,094). The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the following reasons.

The Applicants submit that Schofield et al. does not teach or suggest an automatic exterior light control, comprising: an image array sensor, said image array sensor comprising an array of pixel sensors; and a controller configured to generate an exterior light control signal, said controller is further configured to generate a predetermined rate of change of said exterior light control signal over a predetermined time that is a function of at least one variable selected from a group comprising: a current inclination angle of a headlight, an estimated range of an oncoming vehicle, an estimated range of a leading vehicle and an ambient light level as now recited in claim 1 of the present application as amended via this paper. In that claims 2-4 depend from claim 1, the Applicants submit that claims 1-5 are in condition for allowance over Schofield et al. It should be understood that the amendments to claim 1 were to more clearly define the invention and that none of these amendments were made to

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distinguish from prior art. Therefore, Applicants submit that the scope of claims 1-5, including equivalents thereof, shall be unaffected by the amendments.

The Applicants submit that Schofield et al. does not teach or suggest an automatic exterior light control, comprising: an image array sensor, said image array sensor is configured to sense at least one controlled vehicle illumination range and at least one other vehicle; and a controller, said controller is configured to generate an exterior light control signal as a function of said controlled vehicle illumination range and said at least one other vehicle as now recited in claim 5 of the present application as amended via this paper. In that claims 6-15 depend from claim 5, the Applicants submit that claims 6-15 are in condition for allowance over Schofield et al. It should be understood that the amendments to claim 5 where to more clearly define the invention and that none of these amendments where made to distinguish from prior art. Therefore, Applicants submit that the scope of claims 5-15, including equivalents thereof, shall be unaffected by the amendments.

The Applicants submit that Schofield et al. does not teach or suggest an automatic exterior light control, comprising: an image array sensor, said image array sensor is configured to sense at least one controlled vehicle illumination range; and a controller, said controller is configured to generate an exterior light control signal as a function of said controlled vehicle illumination range as now recited in claim 16 of the present application as amended via this paper. In that claims 17-24 depend from claim 16, the Applicants submit that claims 16-24 are in condition for allowance over Schofield

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et al. It should be understood that the amendments to claim 16 were to more clearly define the invention and that none of these amendments were made to distinguish from prior art. Therefore, Applicants submit that the scope of claims 16-24, including equivalents thereof, shall be unaffected by the amendments.

The Applicants submit that Schofield et al. does not teach or suggest an automatic exterior light control, comprising: an image array sensor, said image array sensor comprising an array of pixel sensors; and a controller configured to generate an exterior light control signal, said controller is further configured to generate a predetermined rate of change of said exterior light control signal over a predetermined time period that is a function of a brightness of at least one detected light source as now recited in claim 28 of the present application as amended via this paper. In that claims 29-31 depend from claim 28, the Applicants submit that claims 28-31 are in condition for allowance over Schofield et al. It should be understood that the amendments to claim 28 were to more clearly define the invention and that none of these amendments were made to distinguish from prior art. Therefore, Applicants submit that the scope of claims 28-31, including equivalents thereof, shall be unaffected by the amendments.

The Applicants submit that Schofield et al. does not teach or suggest an automatic exterior light control, comprising: an image array sensor, said image array sensor comprising an array of pixel sensors; and a controller configured to generate an exterior light control signal, said controller is further configured to generate a predetermined rate of change of said exterior light control signal over a predetermined

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time period that is not a function of a rate of change in distance to a detected light source as now recited in claim 32 of the present application as amended via this paper. In that claims 33-35 depend from claim 32, the Applicants submit that claims 32-35 are in condition for allowance over Schofield et al. It should be understood that the amendments to claim 32 were to more clearly define the invention and that none of these amendments were made to distinguish from prior art. Therefore, Applicants submit that the scope of claims 32-35, including equivalents thereof, shall be unaffected by the amendments.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-4, 6-10, 14-15, 17-19, 23-27 and 29-31, as originally presented, along with claims 1, 5, 11-13, 16, 20-22, 28 and 32, as amended via this paper, are in condition for allowance. No new subject matter has been added via the amendments to the claims presented in this paper.

Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider this case. The Applicants contend that this case is now in condition for allowance. The Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Please contact the undersigned should additional information be required.

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Respectfully submitted,
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By: Gentex Corporation

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Date

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